

Great Operas New to Omaha Will Be Sung by National Company of Canada

AN OPERA heard in America a comparatively few times will be produced here as the initial offering of the National Opera company of Canada, which will play an engagement of two nights at the Auditorium, Omaha, on Thursday and Friday of this week. The opera is "La Gioconda," by Ponchielli, a composer who shows in this work the influence of both Verdi and Wagner and has packed the score with melodic gems in sufficient number to make notable three operas were they divided among them. "La Gioconda" is a riot of wonderful arias, choruses and orchestral interludes. It received its premiere performance in Canada this season at the hands of the notable Canadian organization which will present it here and impelled the critics there to rapture over its scintillating score, its picturesque scenes and its dramatic intensity of story.

Marie Rappold, leading soprano of the National Opera company of Canada, who for six successive years was heard at the Metropolitan Opera House of New York, will appear in the title role and Jose Segura-Tallien, a Spanish baritone, who has proven the sensation of the Montreal season by his depiction of the highly dramatic roles, will appear as Barnaba, possibly his greatest characterization. Others in the cast to be heard here are Giovanni Fermo, a young tenor who hails from Italy's most famous seat of opera, Teatro in Scala of Milan; Rosa Oltzka, a Russian contralto, whose fame is world-wide; Maria Claessens, a Belgian soprano for the three years previous to her present engagement a member of the Boston opera, and Giovanni Martino, who is ranked as the greatest of Spanish basses.

Of a recent performance by this company Raymond O'Neill writes in the Cleveland Leader:

All the wonders of Italian grand opera with its moon made of congealed hate, its sun flooding the earth with rays of hot and passionate love and its every word and note giving expression to unforgetting vividness of scene and suggestion were laid before a large Hippodrome audience last night by the Montreal Opera company in its performance of Ponchielli's old fashioned "La Gioconda."

Standing full in the spotlight, the villain sang at the top of his voice of the dire things he was going to do to a pair of unhappy lovers, whose main pair of unhappy lovers were standing but ten feet away from him and were wondering aloud what the villain was going to do to them.

Again the pair of unhappy lovers sang fortissimo the darkest secrets to each other with the villain standing concealed in the friendly rays of the spot light a piece to the right or left of them, and again the lovers wondered how in the name of all that was reasonable the villain was aware of their love and the weighty things they cried at each other.

The audience, but little smaller than that of the opening night, enjoyed the thing immensely. Preen of the scholastic and churchy gloom and misery of the doleful "Samson and Delilah" of the previous night, they unloosed their pent-up enthusiasm in direct proportion to the rain the singers gave their voices. They broke into solos, duets, trios and concerted sections with applause that plainly said, "let the continuity of the action go home."

And the singers, if only to show they were no stiff-necked operatic gods, pulled ponies out of their side and



MARIA CLAESSENS - Mezzo Soprano



MAX SALZINGER



ETHEL GILMORE - Prima Ballerina

valiantly threw off the effects of deadly poison to come before the footlights and bow and bow.

It was a night in which voice and action were the things. In fact there was such a plethora of action and plots breeding a multitude of secondary and tertiary plots that the learned who brought their scores and librettos threw both aside and, subjecting reason for the night, simply drank in with thirsty ears the rain of vocal and instrumental melody.

The cast was one in which vocal power and energy were pre-eminent. All sang for the glory of song and it seemed for a time as if there would be no roof left on the Hippodrome to shelter a rival operatic troupe coming to the same stage later in the season.

Marie Rappold was "La Gioconda," a poor street singer who early in the opera threw away her modest clothes for silks and velvets. From whom they came no one knew, but there were plenty in the audience willing to aver the girl was at least good to her blind mother. She sang in a voice of pleasing quality, of great smoothness in production, with an innate artistic sense and with a degree of coquetry.

A huge voice, charged with passion and one that sought passionate rather than refined utterance, was that of Maria Claessens, the Laura of the play. Her stage husband, Alvisio, impersonated by Giovanni Martino, sang with a tone that was warm, round and full. Rosa Oltzka, as the blind mother,

temperament. His voice was always a pleasure.

The chorus distinguished itself. It sang the famous choruses of the opera, with brightness and sonority and unflinching spirits.

The ballet again executed a few meaningless and graceless steps and demonstrated for the second time it was the weakest part of the Canadian forces. Director Agide Jacchia put a vast amount of joy into his work on the stand and obtained commendable results.

An opera with a truly grand climax in "Samson et Dalila," which is the offering of the National Opera company for Friday night. While Saint-Saens paints with heavy, furious strokes of primary colors this elemental scene, this score of his at the same time contains some of the most exquisite manifestations of his genius. There is in "Samson et Dalila" much more than musicianship and technique and melody. The voice that speaks in the "Samson et Dalila" score is that of a harassed people driven from pillars of pre-tyranny to posts of physical destitution until their very faith in divine justice wavers and they come to the point where mockery of sanctity is easy.

Leo Slezak, the giant Czech tenor, will

distinguished herself chiefly by singing of the key.

As Enzo, Giovanni Fermo got rid of his tones with an energy that never failed him. His voice possesses a winning quality that might become even more pronounced were he to give it a more varied color. The villainous Barnaba, was Segura-Tallien, who departed himself always with dignity and sang with unequal

sing the role of Samson and Mme. Ger-ville-Reache will sing Dalila in the performance on Friday night. The rest of the cast will be in keeping with the importance of the leading roles, and it is promised that such another presentation is not likely to be seen in a generation.

Older operators had their Hauermeister, the younger generation, which is rapidly supplanting them with new stars to worship, new traditions to adhere to and changed ideals, perhaps, to cling to, have their Claessens. Bauermeister was the salvation of many a performance that the Metropolitan organization of New York gave in its early days under Grau and Corriell. Claessens has done to the rescue similarly innumerable times for more than one organization. Whenever any prima donna contracts a cold or is afflicted with temperamental disorders, Claessens, who never has any of these, if she be with the organization in which the contretemps arises, blandly dons the garb of whatever the role and steps on the stage with the greatest un-concern, all prepared and primed, at a few hours' notice, and little printed slips in the programs in the hands of the auditors inform them that "owing to the sudden indisposition of Madame Highzee, Madame Claessens will assume the role of Whatmayshappentobe on short notice."

While Mme. Claessens is classified as a contralto on the lists of the National Opera company of Canada, yet she has often assumed soprano roles and sung them with success as great as that which invariably greets her contralto essays. Her range is remarkable, her repertoire unusual and her preparedness to assume a vast multiplicity of roles on the shortest possible notice is almost uncanny. Thorough musicianship is what makes it possible for her to accomplish these wonders; one may have a marvelous voice, but only those with the inborn temperament and the musical heartbeat can rise to the top.

Belgium is Mme. Claessens' native soil, but strange as it may seem she has sung in almost all the greatest music capitals of Europe except her native Brussels. In America she was prima donna contralto of the Boston Opera company for the years immediately previous to her affiliation with the National Opera forces. Mme. Claessens will be heard in the role of Laura in "La Gioconda," a characterization of parallel importance with that of the title heroine.

Key to the Situation—See Advertising.

U. P. Legal Lights Here for Meeting

Legal representatives of the Union Pacific from all along the line are in the city, holding a family meeting with the legal department of the road. There are some fifteen to eighteen in attendance at the gathering.

In the past there have been family meetings of the freight, passenger and other departments of the Union Pacific, but this is the first time that the legal representatives have ever gotten together to talk shop.



BY HENRIETTA M. REES.

THIS week the season is on! As the New York Metropolitan season opened with "La Gioconda" so does ours. While ours lasts only two nights, it will be a fine season while it does last, giving us the opportunity of hearing an opera which contains one of the most famous ballets in the world, and the masterpiece of one of the most celebrated French composers. It is seldom that we have grand opera of any sort, and rarely that a company of such pronounced standing as the National Grand Opera of Canada visits us.

Both of the operas which will be given are new to Omaha and in the hands of competent singers of proven worth will give admirable productions. The company was in Kansas City last week, and drew 12,000 people to the performance. For "La Gioconda" the company combined with Pavlova, who was also in the city, with the result that the great convention hall was completely sold out. "Samson and Delilah" was given at the matinee, and brought out a record matinee crowd. The Kansas City Times commented upon its being the largest opera audience ever brought out in that city, and in its review said in part:

Kansas City met itself coming and going at Convention hall last night. The proceeds at the afternoon performance had scarcely cleared the aisles when the forerunners of the largest Kansas City opera audience began arriving. As the convention grew thicker at 8 o'clock, thousands who had hurried home at 6:30 for a bite of dinner were pouring in to show their tickets for the second time in a few hours.

"La Gioconda"—and Pavlova—needed all the seats—and it was 12:35 when the night's bill ended. The start was a half-hour late.

The 5,000 who crowded Convention hall last night for the closing performance of the Canadian Opera company represented Kansas City at its best. "La Gioconda" represented the Canadian Opera company at its best. It had had kaleidoscopic contouring; it had voices in variety; its settings were picturesque.

The performance of "Samson and Delilah" proved to be the great musical treat that was promised. Indeed it is many years since Kansas City heard an opera of such genuine musical interest. It is truly a heroic work, clear and strong in its dramatic outline and with music of a massive, architectural beauty. The first stroke of genius in its conception was the transformation of Dalila from the commercial wanton of the Bible story into a woman dedicated to the service of her god. In this way the conflict between Dalila and Jehovah is made to serve the purpose of a supernatural background to the human action of the drama in the impressive manner the Greek poets used the Olympian conflicts of their deities, although without the ethical or un-ethical balance of the classics.

SHE WILL SING FOR THE MAIL CARRIERS' BENEFIT.



Alna Gluck

the most important musical events of the season.

We hear constantly about the progress of musical appreciation among the people and how people all over the United States are awakening to the call of what is best in music. More recitals are constantly making good and finding an audience for their work, more local musical organizations are springing into existence, and succeeding, and more opera companies are formed and the older ones are finding more support. This year New York has been able to maintain two resident opera companies, the Metropolitan and the Century company, which sing in English, but at that it has taken a large city and strong financial backing to uphold such a wealth of musical dramatic art. More interest is being evidenced in this form of artistic expression, all over the country. While in opera the music is necessarily secondary to the text, it accompanies every word and the pantomime. As the music lends color and effectiveness to the words, so vice versa the words lend meaning and interpretation to the music, if the composer has been successful. It is this close relationship

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AMUSEMENTS. AMUSEMENTS. AMUSEMENTS. AMUSEMENTS. AMUSEMENTS. AMUSEMENTS. AMUSEMENTS. AMUSEMENTS.

at the

Box Office

Auditorium

Monday Morning, February 16, at 9 a. m.

Canadian National Opera Co.

Now on Triumphant Tour of the United States--Breaking all Records for a Grand Opera Co. Capacity houses in every city

Thursday Evening, Feb. 19
La Gioconda

OPERA IN FOUR ACTS—BY PONCHIELLI—IN ITALIAN.

Gioconda	Marie Rappold
Enzo	Giovanni Fermo
La Gioconda	Rosa Oltzka
Laura	Maria Claessens
Alvisio	Giovanni Martino
Barnaba	José Segura-Tallien
Enzo	Natale Cervi
Canoro	Pietro Angeli
Teppo	Harold Kossel
GRAND CORPS DE BALLET.	
Premiere Danseuse	Ethel Gilmore
Conductor	Agide Jacchia

Cleveland Leads

CENT-EVERYWHERE

VOICES FROM OUT OF NORTH PLEASE LOVERS OF OPERA

Montreal Company Establishes Itself With Clevelanders on Opening Night.

TWO STARS DIVIDE HONORS

Slezak and Gerville-Reache Hold Auditors Despite Dreariness of Saint-Saens Composition.

SOCIETY IS OUT IN FORCE

BY RAYMOND O'NEIL.

The opera company that came out of the North to open its three days' season of three-dollar grand opera at the Hippodrome last night with Saint-Saens' "Samson and Delilah," brought no chilling breezes with it.

Detroit Free Press

SOCIETY SWARMS FOYERS AT OPERA

Beautifully Gowned Women Occupy Boxes and Orchestra Seats at Opening.

Many Out-of-Town People Among Throng at Hippodrome.

During the intermissions last night of the first performance of this year's season, the foyer of the

Friday Evening, February 20.
Samson Et Dalila

OPERA IN THREE ACTS—BY SAINT-SAENS—IN FRENCH.

Dalila	Jeanne Gerville-Reache
Samson	Leo Slezak
Le Grand Prêtre	Georges Roselli
Ahimelch	Max Salzinger
Un Hebreu	Gaston Radolf
Un Messager	Emile Frances
Premier Philistin	Louis Ferland
Deuxieme Philistin	The Baron Glinksky
GRAND CORPS DE BALLET.	
Premiere Danseuse	Ethel Gilmore
Conductor	Agide Jacchia

Orders for seats accompanied by checks filled immediately in the order received. Make checks payable to J. M. Gillan, Manager Auditorium, Omaha.

For further particulars as to out-of-town or local, box or opera parties, call, write or see

Lucius Pryor
Local Mgr. for the Opera Co.
Address Picture Dept., 3d Floor, Brandeis Stores.

Prices for Single Performances:

Boxes	\$3.00
First Section, Main Floor	\$2.50
Second Section, Main Floor	\$2.00
Third Section, Main Floor	\$1.50
First Two Rows, Balcony	\$2.00
Second Two Rows, Balcony	\$1.50
Third Two Rows, Balcony	\$1.00
Last Four Rows, Balcony	75c

Kansas City Star Feb 10.

OPERA SEASON DREW 12,000

THE RECEIPTS FOR THREE PERFORMANCES WERE \$18,500.

For "La Gioconda" Last Night Convention Hall Was Sold Out—"Samson and Delilah" Yesterday Afternoon.

Kansas City met itself coming and going at Convention Hall last night.

The crowds at the afternoon performance had scarcely cleared the aisles when the forerunners of the largest Kansas City opera audience began arriving. As the convention grew thicker at 8 o'clock, thousands who had hurried home at 6:30 for a bite of dinner were pouring in to show their tickets for the second time in a few hours.

Cleveland Leader.

HEAR GRAND OPERA WITH SLEZAK STAR

Throngs Crowd Hippodrome, Thrill as "Samson and Delilah" is Presented.

Jeanne Gerville-Reache, as Temptress, Shares in Triumphs.

BIBLE LOVE'S PORTRAYED

Ancient Narrative of Events Leading to Samson's Destruction of the Temple Depicted by Stirring Score in Which Chorus Plays Prominent Part—Slezak, Critic Says, is Power as Opera Star—and Emphasized Part of Gigantic Ballet.

The World's Greatest Opera at Popular Prices

When Slezak was leading tenor with the Chicago Opera Co., the prices were always \$5.00, best seats.

When Rappold starred with the Metropolitan Opera Co., main floor seats were \$6.00 to \$8.00.

When Gerville-Reache was leading contralto with Hammerstein's Manhattan Opera Co., the same kind of seats you pay \$2.50 for here in Omaha were charged \$5.00 for in New York City.

Omaha Society and Music Lovers Will Also Give this Great Company a Rousing Reception